

# TOP OF THE HILL

Volume 4, Number 3

MBA Junior School

April 1999

## Fathers, Sons, & Homer Hickam

By Ted Tywang

Got dreams? Homer Hickam did. Mr. Hickam's memoir, *Rocket Boys*, is the story of his life in a small mining town in Coalwood, West Virginia. He grew up with little or no opportunity to be anything but a miner. It seemed that just like all the other boys in Coalwood, Mr. Hickam was not destined for greatness. Homer Hickam, though, had other plans for his life, and he disregarded destiny, defying his father. Due to the rockets Homer and his friends built, along with their perseverance, the rocket boys were able to go to col-

lege and achieve jobs other than in coal mining. Look where Mr. Hickam's "silly pipe dreams" got him in life! He is now a famous



Rocket Boy Homer Hickam

retired NASA rocket scientist, not to mention a national success as a best selling author. (If you haven't read *Rocket Boys*, I highly recommend it.) Mr. Hickam was the highlight of MBA's annual father-son dinner a few weeks ago. His speech, which truly came from the heart, was a huge success. It was interesting, purposeful, and left me wanting more. A few memorable statements Mr. Hickam made at the banquet were, "Life without adventure is a life unfulfilled," and "You can either agree with me, or you can be

wrong," (Mr. Hickam's mother said this) and especially, "Sons, obey your fathers, but Fathers, help your sons to soar." This a good lesson for fathers and sons alike to observe.

After the banquet I was fortunate enough to catch up with Mr. Hickam and ask him a few questions. When asked if John Glenn's recent embarkment into space at the age of sixty-seven had rekindled his boyhood fantasy of traveling in space, Mr. Hickam replied that yes, he still held on to his desire of space travel, but not because of John Glenn. Mr. Hickam voiced his opinion that everyone should go into space. He even went on to say that ten or fifteen years from now, there will be companies who can and will take people other than astronauts into space. I later asked Mr. Hickam what advice he would offer to the youth of MBA. He said, "First, discover what your passion in life is. Turn the TV off, turn the radio off, turn your parents off if you have to. Just have quiet time and think what your passion is. Then, from there, just try your best to do whatever it is that you love in life." So, boys, keep on dreaming and doing what you love. Just try not to dream in class!!

## Swimming - The Sport of the Gods

By Ian Thornhill

This season the coaching staff of Mrs. Seiters and Mr. Runberg led the varsity swimmers to a 3rd consecutive region championship, a third place finish in the state meet. Throughout the course of the swimming season, the mi-crobe squad of Will Choppin, Matt Hearn, Paul Reynolds, Ian Thornhill, Jeff Ledbetter, Sam Claycombe, and Branch Howard braved the torrent of never-ending laps in an ice cold pool at the Sportsplex.

Some of the high-lights of the swimming sea-

son: when Ian Thornhill stepped up for his virgin race and on a false start, did a



Warrior of the Water

full flip into the pool, Speedo and all; how all other guys wore Speedos only when required, but Sam Claycombe actually preferred his Speedo to ordinary swim wear and chose to wear his to practice every day. There were embarrassing moments for Paul Reynolds and Matt Hearn. Paul, forgetting to tighten the strings on his speedo, was stepping up for his final race of the region meet when his Speedo fell off after his dive into the water. Paul

Reynolds is a swimmer of great perseverance in my book for actually swimming the entire race after doing the "Partial Monty" in front of everyone in the stands. Matt Hearn had a similar problem at the BHS meet.

This article is dedicated to Mrs. Seiters, Mr. Runberg, and Mr. Spiegl for their love of swimming.

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# FEATURES

## Diversity on the Hill

By Paul Reynolds

When Montgomery Bell Academy was founded one hundred and thirty-two years ago, Montgomery Bell donated \$20,000 to form this institution so that every boy in the greater Nashville area could afford a valuable education. Recently, a new diversity committee has been formed to further that dream. Mr. Gioia says, "The purpose of this committee is to integrate different cultures into the MBA community."

Mr. Coverstone and Mrs. Simmons head this committee, which also contains three Junior School teachers. Those are Mrs. Bourland, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Corzine. The other five members are Mr. Gioia, Mr. Womack, Mr. Compton, Ms. Tilly, and Ms. Adams. Ms. Adams, an African American, has had experience with diversifying schools. She was hired as an assistant in the Admissions and Development office, but now has added the diversity committee as a special interest.

Mr. Coverstone, an English and Government teacher, and one of the high-school debate coaches, said that a goal of the committee is to receive an increased number of applications from minority students and teachers. Mrs. Simmons said, "The committee is looking for no real percentage of minority students, but just to keep improving the cultural growth of MBA. It is a very deliberate effort."

There are many ways that the diversity committee is planning to reach its goal. One way is through assemblies. There is a sub-committee that helps plan assemblies. This group attempts to attract speakers from many different backgrounds. They asked Vivian Fuller, the former Athletic Director at Middle Tennessee State University, to speak in a recent assembly. As you probably remember, she spoke about the pride she had because she was the only female African-American Athletic Director at a Division I school at the time. Another goal of the diversity committee is to look for ways to cooperate with other schools. This co-operation can be reached in a number of ways. "One way is to form collaborative efforts," said Mrs. Simmons, "like joint school theatrical plays." Another way is through support systems. These support programs will give incom-

ing students a better chance to succeed. There is already a summer program that helps, and the diversity committee wants to expand that program to include students from a wider variety of schools.

MBA also wants to attract a more diverse faculty. Mrs. Simmons thinks MBA can accomplish this goal. She said, "One idea already in progress is broadening the range of applicants for teaching positions by communicating with historically black colleges regarding teaching opportunities."

Students from different backgrounds are also encouraged to apply to MBA. Mrs. Simmons added, "The committee hopes to encourage examination of the current curriculum to find ways to celebrate diversity within an educational context." One new course will include studying multi-ethnic authors. A variety of viewpoints, talents, and interests are wanted at MBA. All different cultures, races, and ethnicities are welcomed.

MBA is making great strides in expanding the diversity of the faculty, student activities, and students at the school. The recently formed diversity committee will stay together until the members feel that Montgomery Bell's one hundred and thirty-two year-old dream has been fully realized.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Top of the Hill,

As I read Brian Christie's article of the Top 5 albums of the 90's, I was in total shock. Let's start with *Three Dollar Bill Ya'll*: Limp Bizkit. This album is just not that great, especially not good enough to be on a list of top five albums of a decade. It has maybe one good song with its parental advisory label. With songs like "Stink Finger" and "Leech," it just does not seem attractive to purchase. The cover is unappealing and the name is tacky. I do not think an average person would like to walk into Sam Goody and buy this album. Enough said.

As I continued reading, I saw *The Score*: The Fugees. I wasn't as shocked as at the first choice, but I personally do not really like this album. I think Lauryn Hill is great, but the two other members are just there for either looks or to "support" her, which I do not think they do a very good

job of. Lauryn Hill is a very talented person, but I do believe her new album (solo) is a lot better than this one.

I continued reading and the next choice

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*The cover is unappealing  
and the name is tacky.*

---

was *Across the Wire*: Counting Crows. This album is pretty good but again, it should not be on this list. It is a decent album with good new mixes, except I enjoyed the original version a lot better. I really like Counting Crows, and they deliver well in this album, but I do not think it should be on this list.

Then I came to *Dave Matthews and Tim Reynolds Live at Luther College*: Dave Matthews. This album is all right if you like Dave Matthews

without the other talented members of the band. I love Dave Matthews Band, but it is because of the drums, fiddle, bass, saxophone, flute, along with Dave's vocals and guitar. The version of "Ants Marching" is, for me, painful to listen to without the members of the band. If you "can't scratch the surface of their meaning" then why do you listen to them?

Finally, I read *THE NUMBER ONE ALBUM OF ALL TIME IS...Essential Lynyrd Skynyrd*: Lynyrd Skynyrd. The bit about being a "washed-up prejudiced hick with no life if you like this album" was uncalled for. This comment offended many people. I was offended because I love the guitar solo in "Free Bird" and the songs "Sweet Home Alabama" and "Tuesday's Gone." I think Brian should have taken the number one album of the 90's a little more seriously.

If you would like to know my top five albums of the 90's, then just ask me.

Sincerely,  
Richard Howell



# ENTERTAINMENT

## The J Files: Corzinese

By Jay Howell

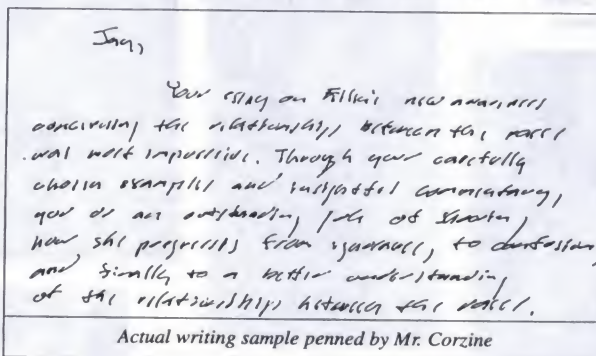
As some of you might know, FOX just broadcasted the opening of an Egyptian tomb. Since there were bound to be some sort of hieroglyphics inside, we would like to pay tribute to MBA's own set of illegible, untranslatable symbols understood by only the language's creator, Mr. Brooks Corzine.

Archaeologists have studied Corzinese, the name given to this strange language, for years and years. Ever since

Mr. Corzine was the young grammar schooler we could never think him to be, scientists have pondered over the child phenomenon's delight in abusing the English alphabet. Mr. Corzine claims it is a form of ancient English, but archae-

graders easier next year as well as 8th graders for the remaining quarter or so, we have composed a set of English letters to their Corzinese counterpart. a=u, b=h, c=i, d=d, e=y, f=t, g=s, h=h, i=l, j=l, k=k, l=l, m=m, n=n, o=o, p=l, q=g, r=v, s=l, t=t, u=u, v=v, w=w, x=x, y=l, z=z. As you can see, some letters are quite similar to each other. The only ones that are different happen to be the ones used most. Take a word like *success*; in Corzinese it would look like *lullllll*.

In order to somehow incorporate this into a J File due to the absence of a normal one in this issue, I would like to quickly add that Mr. Corzine is actually an alien from a distant planet bound to dissolve society by first dissolving our language.



Actual writing sample penned by Mr. Corzine

ologists have recently compared it to stretches made on cave walls.

In order to make the lives of 7th

## Year 2000: The Real Story

By Wilson Garrett

Many people are trying to make sense of the world as we approach the year 2000. There are so many problems that it is too hard to figure out the big picture. Well, you're in luck because I have a theory.

### 1. Bill Gates

In control, Bill Gates has his hands in everything. The Clinton Scandal, war with Iraq, Michael Jordan's retirement, and the Y2K problem, which tie into his Ultimate Plan. He has used his technological empire to set up a world-wide network in which he has gained control. The following are things he has orchestrated that will culminate in the year 2000.

### 2. The Clinton Scandal

The Clinton Scandal is Gates' primary attempt to divert attention from his sinister plot. Bill Clinton, Monica Lewinsky, Hillary and others (excluding Starr) are all paid actors. The entire scandal is a trick by Gates to distract the dumb. However, this diversion has recently lost steam and other methods have been taken to distract the world populace.

### 3. War with Iraq

Since the Clinton Scandal lost steam, Bill Gates had to think of a way to spice it up. Gates consulted Saddam Hussein, Dennis Rodman, WWF's Undertaker, Kenneth Starr, and Jerry Falwell. Together they came up with a fake war with Iraq, along with a few other minor distractions, i.e. an earthquake in Columbia. Gates and Saddam worked out the fake war. What other explanation is there for no one's getting killed and our hearing of it? It was a fake! This distraction was able to add the necessary steam to the scandal.

### 4. The Retirement

I have one thing to say, keep your money on the Bulls. The only reason Michael Jordan left was to train to defeat Bill Gates before he completes his Ultimate Plan. The only way to stop Jordan from defeating Bill Gates would be to take a silver dagger blessed by a druid under the full moon, and remove his heart with it. However, since Jordan had a diamond chest plate surgically implanted in his body, it will be impossible to stop him.

### 5. Y2K

The Y2K program was designed by

Bill Gates. He has found a way to upload it into major computers by means of the Internet. It will shut down utilities such as water and electricity. When the year 2000 hits, all power will shut down and the Ultimate Plan will activate.

### 6. Ultimate Plan

The Ultimate Plan is what Bill Gates

*Gates consulted Saddam Hussein, Dennis Rodman, WWF's Undertaker, Kenneth Starr, and Jerry Farwell.*

has been working on during his time on earth. What it is, is that when Y2K goes off, Bill Gates will have all government cede to him their land, and he will restore power, eventually. During the black out, he will travel to Transylvania, and he will open a portal to Hell, from which an army of Kenneth Starrs will come to control the new Earth. Bill Gates will then declare himself World Emperor. Have a nice day!



# FEATURES

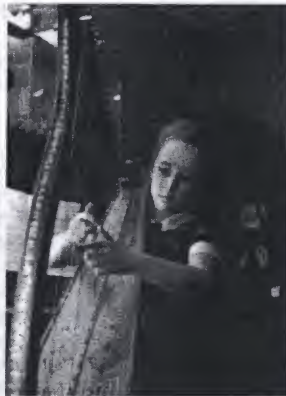
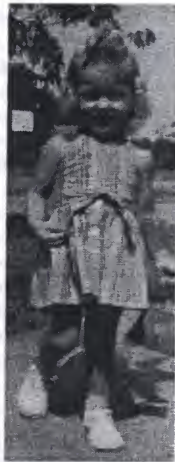
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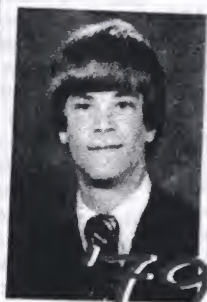
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Morrissey



# FEATURES





# SPORTS

## Playin' with Heart

By The Quinn

The season was a long one. Starting in November with practices of fundamentals and sprints, the team improved dramatically over the season, and it showed in their narrow loss to Page in the tournament. Buckling to Page earlier in the season, the eighth grade only lost by 7 points in their final game. With more and more practice, each player got better. Team members would come to the gym early some mornings, working to improve their dribbling, shooting, and passing skills. The team also accomplished a goal set at the beginning of the season to be able to do 200 pushups. At the last practice, in under 10 minutes, each member of the team did 200 pushups.

While the season was challenging, there



Eason on a bad hair day

was a lot of fun in the game. Intense games of Gotcha were sometimes played at practice, with Coach Roberts occasionally joining the fun. Of course Andrew Quinn won all these games, for his free-throw shooting was phenomenal. Also, at the end of the season, the team met on a Sunday to have a short practice before the tournament and then to watch Hoosiers and eat pizza. The team called Robert Foster "The Duck" for his interesting and unusual running habit, and Coach Roberts even picked up the name as the season went on. The pre-game "study hall" in the Roberts Room was always fun, with Anderson Green as the one-man comedy show. "Shredder!" and "Foot Soldiers!" became coined phrases.

Each player learned a lot from the 98-99 eighth grade basketball season, and not just about losing. The team showed a lot of heart by refusing to quit under any circumstances. The season was a memorable one for each player, and although some of the memories are tough ones of suicides and 6 down-and-backs in under a minute, most of them are ones of improvement and fun.

## Russell's Boys

By Trevor Yarbrough

This year, the seventh grade basketball team practiced and played from late November through mid-February. Over this time we compiled a record of 9-7, coming in second in our year-end tournament. The players were: Brent Boyuett, Cole Bourland, Corey Burton, Edwin Conley, Chris Chenery, Joseph Donovan, Michael Fisher, Justin Games, David Harper, Wylie Jones, Greg McCord, Scott Pettus, David Regan, Tom Santi, and Trevor Yarbrough. We were coached by Emmett Russell, who says, "The most



Fischer doin' his stuff

memorable thing about our season was how we improved over the course of it. We lost by 37 against BA our first game, and only by 7 the next time we played them."

Our managers this year were Andrew Mills and Patrick Shanely, who both did a great job. The team would like to thank Mrs. Steele for keeping our stats all year, and Coach Chenery for driving the team bus to away games. But most of all, we want to thank Mr. Russell for being such a great coach to us this year.

## Riflery at MBA - Duck and Cover

By Jackson Balthrop

Usually you would hold a grudge against the "few and accurate," but there is nothing wrong with one of us and a firearm. Well, most of us anyway. We may not be the cream of the crop as far as athleticism goes, and you may say that those in riflery are not good at anything and that is why we do riflery, but that is not always the case.

Is riflery a sport? I, personally, am now convinced that riflery is a sport. After all, many people consider hunting a sport. How is this any different? Also, hunting is not in the Olympic Games. Many people consider Nascar Stock Car Racing a sport; like Nascar, the sport of riflery also requires consistency, endurance, and hand-eye coordination.

You may mock a typical riflery practice, shooting, aiming, and more shooting, but there is really more than that. As soon as the "athletically challenged" enter the "classroom," they are immediately transformed into excellent sportsmen. Which brings up another point; riflery is currently the safest sport, meaning that it has the least amount of injuries. Riflery is also a high mental sport, requiring maximum concentration and thought capabilities. It is considered to be a fun alternative to intramurals and for a few, a chance to excel and possibly win a medal. Why should someone be mocked if they are doing something they enjoy?

Riflery may not be accepted as a sport yet here at the MBA, but you really ought to consider it. It requires just about as much skill as any other sport. Ponder these words the next time you stare into the window and laugh, the next time you tap the glass until someone messes up or gets mad, or the next time that you prepare to ridicule a "riflete."



# FEATURES

## The Truth About Pigeons

By: Hamilton Berry  
Artwork: Rob Zellem

Until recently, pigeons seemed to dominate the MBA campus. In numerous throngs they came, day after day, to sit above the Ball Building columns, and to annoy MBA students with their continuous "cooing." The school thinks it finally has found a solution to the pigeon "problem." I think not...maybe they are in fact more intelligent than we believe them to be...

(just stop reading now if you're in a bad mood)  
The following is a letter found

*In numerous throngs, they came, day after day, to sit above the Ball Building columns...*

by an MBA student. It was marked "Top Secret - Property of the Pigeon Liberation Organization."

Agent 255555:

You probably remember me from the general assembly at Bookstar four weeks ago. Since you've left for the downtown-Nashville Arena sector, things around here have been running smoothly. Yes, very smoothly. Our attempts to annoy the enemy are beginning to succeed. Our dive-bombers (now over 75,000) just completed a thorough bombing campaign in the MBA sector. Special song-pigeons spent days



they attached crude spikes to our spy's nest points. Really, I thought they could do better than that. Our international leader, General Rejkjavikishish Schlaiki, proposed a brilliant plan to finally "win the war." The entire pigeon population in the US, over 25 million, will act as if they are being defeated, never striking. Then, without notice, the new-and improved PLO will attack. You see, pigeons nationwide are beginning a period of overdosing on Iron Kids Bread and extremely thick mineral water. In about one year, 25 million soldiers of pigeonism will have increased their weight 3 times and bombing ability 8 times. After a final year of weight training, our fighters will reach their peak. We will take the humans, spikes or no spikes, by storm.

"The flow of PLO's is never slow and deals a mighty blow."

-Agent 3500001

Captain Beakpecker Wingflapper

If any of the preceding letter is the slightest bit true, I've got one thing to say: look out..

## 8th Grade Theater: En Garde!

By Rob DeLaney

The third quarter theater enrichment was a success. The class put on scenes from two plays: *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Three Musketeers*. *Romeo & Juliet* begins with a conversation between Wilson Garret, Benvolio, and Bill Cameron, Mercutio. Next, Robert Foster, the infernal Tybalt, enters and threatens Mercutio. After a fight between the hilarious jokster and a fiendish enemy and later a fight between Romeo, Rob DeLaney, and again Tybalt, only one man is left standing.

*The Three Musketeers* involved the entire theater class: the adventurous young D'Artagnian, Jack Lewis, and the wounded musketeer Athos, Richard Howell, along with the other two rogues, Ian Thornhill as Porthos and Rob Shell as Aramis, fight Jussac, Josh Mayhew, and the rest of the cardinal's guards. The musketeers prevail and young D'Artagnian is accepted as an ally of not only the musketeers but also the king.

In conclusion, the eighth grade theater class would like to thank Doug and the Nashville Fencing Academy for allowing us to use their swords in our production and for showing us how to fence and Dr. Fuller for making us memorize our lines.

Welcome  
Grandparents!



# OTHER

## The Mixer: One Man's Opinion

By Richard Howell

The 7th and 8th grade mixers just never seem to change. Here is what

usually happens: There is one group of about ten to twelve

7th grade guys dancing by themselves to any and every song. (Maybe it will take a year for them to discover that dancing with girls has its advantages). Then there is a group of about sixty to seventy-five people who stand around, sing, and make fun of people during the fast songs and then pick out someone to dance with when the song is slow. There is also a group of anti-female guys who shun contact with the opposite sex, ignore the girls, and find other forms of entertainment. Some brought a ball to throw around during the dance.

Finally there is a group of about ten people who just

stand around the refreshments the whole time eating, rearranging the brownies



*So where are the girls?*



*Random shot of six girls*

and refilling cups with ice. And who could forget the DJ who is at every party? He must be at least 95 years old.

This time he stood upon the table, danced,



*Richard shows his feelings for Wilson*

turned the lights on and off every five minutes making all the girls scream, and inspired the crowd with "hip" comments like, "O.K, you groovin' dancers, here's a good tune for you."

One problem with the mixers is the chaperones. Though the presence of parents is always welcomed in certain situations (ie. providing food, clothing, shelter and transportation), when it comes to mixers, parents should stay away. There is nothing worse than being stared at by the mom of the girl you are dancing with. I would much rather have teachers there than parents.



*Tim: The Ladies' Man*

views, planners of the mixers should consider the following:

1. a new D.J.
2. a no ball rule
3. no parent chaperones!!



*No comment*

## Action Packed Intramurals

By Peter Christenberry, Josh Mayhew, & Chris Douse

Intramurals last season was probably the most exciting season in intramural history. Some of the highly competitive teams were the Flying Emfingers, Purity Cows, Asterisks, S'co's, Little Debbie Cakes, PBJ's, and many others. The Emfingers were #1 all season followed by PBJ's and S'Co's. Daily during the regular season, one could see much excitement, determination, and effort from all of the teams. The IL championship was the highlight of the season. The first round went smoothly with most of the teams favored winning, except for the #4 seed Asterisks, which pulled off an upset, defeating the #2 seed PBJ's. Key plays of the game were Paul "Chia" Reynolds and Chris "The Beast" Douse catching 5 touchdowns each. The second round went to all the favorite teams, putting the S'co's and Emfingers in the finals. The championship game was very tense, with neck-and-neck playing by both teams. The team that left the others in their tracks was the Flying Emfingers, led by Captain Peter Christenberry with amazing touchdowns by Hunter Hawkins and Cody Hall, and astounding touchdowns by Dr. Christopher Emfinger. Thanks to all who came out and showed their stuff on the field.

### TOP OF THE HILL STAFF

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